



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS
FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY
COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 739
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
<http://latchildrenscommission.org>**

Monday, March 7, 2016

10:00 AM

AUDIO FOR THE ENTIRE MEETING. (16-1352)

Attachments: [AUDIO](#)

Present: Commissioner Carol O. Biondi, Commissioner Maria Brenes, Commissioner Patricia Curry, Commissioner Wendy Garen, Commissioner John Kim, Commissioner Liz Seipel, Vice Chair Jacquelyn McCroskey, Vice Chair Wendy B. Smith and Chair Sunny Kang

Absent: Commissioner Genevra Berger, Commissioner Candace Cooper, Commissioner Sydney Kamlager and Commissioner Janet Teague

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Call to Order. (16-1209)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kang at 10:00 a.m.

2. Approval of the minutes from the meeting of February 22, 2016. (16-1210)

On motion of Vice Chair Smith, seconded by Commissioner Garen (Commissioners Berger, Cooper, Kamlager, and Teague being absent), this item was approved.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

II. REPORTS

3. Chair's Report. (16-1211)

Chair Kang reported the following:

- **The Statement of Economic Interest (Form 700) is due April 1, 2016, electronic filing instructions are available online;**
- **The Department of Public Health will be hosting a Health Science Summit on March 30, 2016;**
- **First 5 LA, California Community Foundation, California Foundation, and Parsons Foundation will be hosting a convening on "Healing from Trauma and Building Resilience", on April 1, 2016, contact Executive Director, Tamara Hunter, MSW, if you are interested in attending; and**
- **The Board of Supervisors proclaimed March as "National Social Work Month"**

4. Department of Children and Family Services Director's Report by Philip L. Browning, Director. (16-1212)

Director Philip L. Browning, Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) reported the following:

- **DCFS is currently working on its budget and has submitted a request to the Board and the Chief Executive Office (CEO) to recruit additional County Social Workers (CSWs). In the last year, DCFS has hired 1,300 CSWs and brought caseloads down to 24 cases per worker. The agreement with the Katie A. Settlement suggested 15 cases per worker.**
- **With the additional CSWs, they will be able to bring caseloads further down to 20 cases per worker. DCFS continues to aggressively recruit CSWs; however, this is a huge challenge because applicants will have to take a written test, and undergo a medical exam, psychological exam, drug test, and supervisorial review before being hired;**
- **The Bureau of State Audits recently released a report on the 241.1 process. It looked at the process of how juveniles go back and forth between dependency and delinquency. Los Angeles County has the lowest recidivism of counties that were reviewed;**

- DCFS is also working on the Katie A. Settlement Immersion Plan with a hard launch date of April 15, 2016, starting with the Compton and Van Nuys regional offices. Special focus by DCFS and Department of Mental Health (DMH) will be given to these offices. Additional resources are being provided, with particular emphasis on the Core Practice Model (CPM);
- The County's CPM certification process includes certification to become a facilitator, coach, or coach developer. There are currently 550 individuals in DCFS that are certified and the process is dependent on supervisors becoming certified, who can then certify CSWs.
- The Youth Welcome Center (YWC) and the Children's Welcome Center (CWC) are in the process of being closed down. In the last several years, staff have been unable to place children in permanent placement within 24 hours. DCFS is in the process of changing its focus, instead of taking children to the LAC USC facility, children will be taken to one of four state approved Temporary Shelter Care (TSC) facilities.
- Any child that is detained, for which a placement cannot be immediately located will continue to go to the medical HUB for a medical screening before placement in TSC. DCFS will continue to use the Los Angeles USC Violence Intervention Program HUB (VIP) screening process to ensure that child have no medical complications, and will continue to work with Department of Health Services (DHS) to ensure everyone is aware of the process. The Board will be briefed about this process;
- There will be new rules and CSW requirements in terms of psychotropic medication; and
- DCFS continues to work on Congregate Care Reform and the Resource Family Approval process. There will be changes in how families and foster parents are approved and certified beginning in January 2017. DCFS is working internally and with the Association of Community Human Service Agencies to ensure proper policies, procedures, and training are in place.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Mr. Browning responded with the following:

- DCFS has an agreement with the State to take all children detained afterhours to VIP before going to one of four TSC sites;

- All TSC sites have onsite medical support; and
- Based on the CSW's observation, if a child is in a medical distress or in need of medical attention, the CSW will take the child to a medical HUB.

Maricruz Trevino, DCFS, reported the following:

- The prior practice before the CWC and YWC opened did not require medical screenings. Current policy requires that children under the age of three (3) be seen within 10 days and children over the age of three be seen within 30 days for a full medical exam.
- When children are taken for medical exams, the caretakers will have to be the one that takes them and explain any issues the child may be having to the physicians, in terms of diet, sleeping, stool pattern, etc.
- Los Angeles County does not have a blanket order for medical consent for invasive medical exams and will need to obtain a warrant or parental consent for forensic exams.
- Medical screenings are beneficial and a good practice to have, especially in the event of a child being infested with lice; it can be treated prior to entering a facility.
- Children entering TSC sites after hours and on weekends are typically detained during the day, but the CSW was unable find a placement by 5:00 p.m. and/or those that are being detained by law enforcement.
- One TSC site is located in Los Angeles, accepting replacement of children between the ages of 0 and 5 and is the only agency that is equipped to care for babies. Another TSC site is in La Verne, accepting replacements of children that have already been in the system and two TSC sites in Altadena will be accepting newly detained children. DCFS has found that it is best practice to keep newly detained children separated from children being replaced.

In response to questions posed by the Commissioners, Mr. Browning, Ms. Trevino and Roberta Medina, DCFS, responded with the following:

- There is still going to be a transition to ensure that DCFS has procedures and practices in place. DCFS continues to have use of the space at the CWC and an agreement with the providers for services. DCFS continues to work with DHS to finalize the medical screening policy to ensure that no children are traumatized further due to this process;
- Community Care Licensing (CCL) visited the Los Angeles TSC agency on March 3, 2016. The agency's final approval is pending the Fire Marshall approval. This location has had the most renovations to its facility;
- In the current operation of CWC and YWC, 60% of the children are placed within 24 hours and 95% are placed within 72 hours;
- DCFS is looking to place every child in a more permanent placement within 24 hours, although a child or youth may technically remain in a TSC site for 72 hours;
- DCFS staff will be on the premises of each TSC location;
- There are two different groups that could respond to afterhours initial referrals; Multi Agency Response Team or Emergency Response Command Post staff. Both groups will work with the County Counsel to look at warrant issues;
- The CSW, County Counsel, Supervisor, and Assistant Regional Administrator will determine when it is appropriate for the detained child to be screened medically; whether it is in the middle of the night or the next morning.

Chair Kang recommended that Commissioners send additional questions and suggestions on this issue to Tamara N. Hunter, Executive Director, and she will forward them to Mr. Browning's team. Mr. Browning was requested to return in April to provide updates.

III. PRESENTATIONS

5. Department of Children and Family Services Training Program

University of Southern California
Marilyn L. Flynn, PhD, Dean and Professor

University of California, Los Angeles
Todd Franke, PhD, Professor and Department Chair (16-1214)

Marilyn L. Flynn, PhD, Dean and Professor at the University of Southern California, stated that this is a good time to review the vision they had about training program and its impact; the foundation for how the Universities relate to DCFS; how DCFS organizes its training efforts, the content, how they teach; and who they engage with. Dr. Flynn noted that the vision has not been fully achieved and hopes to leave ideas in pursuit of progress.

Todd Franke, PhD, Professor and Department Chair at the University of California, Los Angeles, provided a brief overview of the training status and presented the following:

- **In July 2015, four training centers spread throughout Los Angeles merged into one space in Downtown Los Angeles, thanks to their partnership with USC. All the training now occurs in Downtown LA, with larger trainings being held at hotels. Training is provided on an annual basis to all new CSWs and ongoing training provided to current CSWs and supervisors. DCFS also provides training that the Universities are not involved with;**
- **By having both DCFS and University staff in the same location, it has helped with the coordination of trainings and the work they have been doing.**

Dr. Flynn presented the following on fundamental changes made in training concepts, locations, and relationships:

- **In 2010/2011, a child fatality in Los Angeles County created a large public furor, resulting in several actions being taken. DCFS was held accountable and a part of it was due to poor CSW training. There were also very poor inter agency relationships.**
- **In 2012, staff was overwhelmed with unmanageable workflow, partly due to the large amount of policies. There was confusion about what the**

policy mandates were; whether the timeframes could be achieved; uneven supervision; uncertainty or poor access to community resources; and climate of fear, which made it hard make changes.

Challenges for DCFS:

- There was no coherent plan of succession; however, both the Universities and DCFS were fully implicated. There was a breakdown in the Universities' and DCFS partnership and DCFS Director turnover contributed to the confusion;
- People were being trained; however, there was not much accountability. The County appointed the Blue Ribbon Commission on Child Protection (BRCCP), which, among other things, called for more cross sector relationships; and
- DCFS demanded there be a change in the training relationship, content, and pedagogy. The Universities agreed that it was a good idea since doing the same thing for 20 years did not result in a well-connected relationship.

Training Relationships:

- Setup the idea of DCFS as the “teaching institution”;
- The University Consortium on Children and Families (UCCF) was created to replace the decentralized Inter University Consortium. The Universities would take broad responsibility on the cross sector model looking at training and innovation across all Departments and enhancing the capacity for responding; and
- Mr. Browning brought forth the concept of a DCFS University that modeled modern corporate training. Modern corporations have their own well conceptualized university processes with accreditation, progression and other training concepts associated with a university.

Training Content:

- The Universities rethought training content and introduced evidence based and trauma informed materials. They began the attempt to coordinate training with other departments including the Sheriffs, Probation Department (PD), DMH and Public Health and tried to organize training content in relation to the strategic plan; and

- For continuing staff, the Universities began to think about management and executive level training; how to develop an entire organization, not just the foundation in a new emphasis on quality of supervision. The Universities have also been working with each other to try to change the content that's offered at the masters level so that it connects better with DCFS.

Training Methods:

- There should be more field based training; get out of the classroom and into the field and use projects, shadowing, and observing. Trainees should use the field and experience the basis of instruction. Trainers should use coaching, not lectures;
- Caseloads should be reduced, as new trainees should not have full caseloads until they have had opportunities for shadowing and observation early on; and
- Progression in skill development, e-Learning and simulation have been very powerful accomplishments. Simulation training was designed to introduce people to the experience of entering a home and identifying an abused child and conducting interviews with parents. Supervisors are to be present so they can see how their trainees are doing in these early experiences. The Universities thought about moving many of the training to regional offices and hope to extend the training period to 52 weeks with meaningful assessment.

Where the DCFS University training is today:

- The integrated training site consists of six (6) to seven (7) Universities with DCFS Staff, in one place in which people were happy to work;
- UCCF is now a 501(c)3 organization;
- The DCFS University concept is still evolving; however, there are plans and strategies around it; and
- Cross sector training is still a challenge. The Universities are looking to determine the next steps of how to effectively engage other Departments in an institution where everyone is learning together; it is

not there yet. The Universities themselves can do more. For example, adjunct appointments can be given to experienced senior DCFS staff as they become more accomplished, which will help to ensure that classrooms are better informed by the experience of people by DCFS.

Training Content:

- The Universities have moved towards uniform service delivery model with a core concept. There is some movement away from fear based compliance and towards a better spirit in the interest in professional growth;
- There is no executive training at this point. Continuity and executive development need to be built into the training model to develop it within DCFS; and

Training Method:

- Simulation training is a success and e learning has substantially progressed; however, the field based learning is still a challenge. Staff can explain why shadowing is still a problem, why observing has not been successful, and why they haven't had as many projects in the field as they had hoped. A part of it is that agencies are expanding rapidly and a lot of new people are in the mix; making it hard to introduce new practices in the field;
- The Universities have not gotten to field based model as expected. It's a complicated issue; it is not a failure, but a series of next steps that still needs to be worked on.

Dr. Franke presented the following on area of evaluation:

- An online visualization model is being piloted. This will allow trainers to see exactly what's going on with the training they are providing over the course of the year.

Additional areas of in need of evaluation include:

- Follow-up with new hires and their supervisors six (6) and 12 months post academy to see how they're doing and how the quality of their work is changing over time.

- **Making the simulation evaluation more sophisticated; this is work in progress. There is a need to evaluate the impact of simulation exercises on children and families;**
- **Core Practice Model (CPM) and field activities. There is a need to determine the effectiveness and benefit of these exercises. We have to determine how to evaluate this;**
- **The effectiveness of the UCCF and CalSWEC (California Social Work Education Center) programs, in which we hire MSWs. Is there a difference between hiring MSWs and those without the degree? Are they moving into leadership positions more quickly? Is the investment of funds for these MSWs paying dividends in the quality of their work? This type of evaluation will require Departmental Human Resources support.**

Dr. Flynn presented the following on curriculum framework:

- **When the Universities originally thought about changing the curriculum, they thought about the CPM. Almost all of the work that they have done has been focused on better implementation of this concept;**
- **Learning outcomes need to permanently change so that the culture itself becomes more robust and supportive of innovation, neutral teaming, learning, and development. People need to know about the context of the work they are doing for the population they are working with. They need to know more about who else is in the system, such as the people and agencies they will work with every day and potential community partners that they might engage. This area would allow DCFS to expand and extend more effectively in the communities they are involved with. There is room for more coordination and some experimentation in trying to think of how the Universities can be a better pipeline.**
- **In regards to flow of work, people have to do their work while they are implementing the CPM. The Universities need to work on articulation for people at the workplace so they can help them have a fuller and more effective understanding and implementation of their role.**
- **In regards to progressive development, the DCFS University is not there. There should be connective learning experiences that develop the whole organization, rather than a series of classes. DCFS University is a shared learning environment. This is an ambitious idea, but it can be done if the Universities work on it slowly.**

In response to questions posed by the Commission regarding implementing a similar training model within the Probation Department (PD), Dr. Flynn stated that the training was supported by Title IV E and the funds are already being used by PD; PD can apply for Title IV E, but will need to go through DCFS via training proposal.

Mr. Browning commended Dr. Flynn and Dr. Franke in developing the training and thanked the Board for recognizing the value.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Dr. Franke and Dr. Flynn responded with the following:

- Judges were not consulted directly in trainings; however, some of the trainings were adjusted to address some of their concerns;
- In regards to cross sector training, getting law enforcement, PD, DMH, and Sheriff's present together at the same time is an advantage so that people can get to know each other and know who to contact; building a network from the ground up; and
- In regards to UCCF Curriculum Framework, the items listed in CPM need to be connected (refer to Supporting Document). People can be trained for professional practices, but they also have to practice professionally by documenting what they do, maintain timeframes, etc. The connection between CPM and flow of work is not there yet. The Universities started the focus on getting a uniform CPM and now they can be more expansive in what they aim for.

Mr. Browning added that the training is continually evolving and they have a very good progress in the child fatality review process. The lessons learned from these fatality reviews were incorporated into the training and simulations. Dr. Flynn added that this is an example of moving past the climate of fear and looking at information as a way of improving practices.

Vice Chair McCroskey acknowledged and commended DCFS Training Section staff that were instrumental in the development and ongoing implementation of the training model.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

6. Update on the County's Use of Non-Contracted Group Homes

Auditor-Controller

Robert Campbell, Acting Assistant Auditor-Controller

Michelle Day, Children's Group Home Ombudsman

DCFS

Karen Richardson, Out-of-Home Care Management Division

Probation Department

Lisa Campbell-Motton, Placement Permanency & Quality Assurance

Jessica Gama, Ombudsman

Jennifer Kauman, Professional Standards Bureau (16-1213)

Karen Richardson, Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) provided an update on the County's Use of Non Contracted Group Homes:

- **Three (3) out of the nine (9) recommendations set by the Auditor Controller's office have been implemented;**
- **In response to recommendation number five (5) in the report, placements were reviewed, policy or administrative violations were identified and appropriate corrective and/or disciplinary action was taken;**
- **In response to recommendation number eight (8) in the report, as of January 2016, children placed in non-contracted group homes have been reported to the Children's Group Home Ombudsman Office;**
- **In response to recommendation number nine (9) in the report, as of January 2016 all non-contracted group home and foster family agency providers have been instructed to enter Special Incident Reports(SIR's) in the web based Incident Tracking System(I TRACK);**
- **All other recommendations are currently in progress, policies are being finalized, working in collaboration with the Bureau of Information Systems to improve the web based tracking system, County Counsel is working with the contracts division on creating a specialized agreement that will be utilized for non-contracted agencies and the goal date of completion is March 2016:**
- **There are 36 children currently placed with 17 agencies, which include 11 females and 25 males; 19 are African American; 12 are Hispanic; and 5 are Caucasian, between the ages of 9-20 years old, the average age is 15.**

There are 24 children placed in agencies located in L.A. County, eight (8) are in out of county agencies and three (3) are in out of state agencies.

Lisa Campbell Motton, Probation Department (PD), provided an update on the PD's Use of Non Contracted Group Homes:

- **There are 78 Probation youth currently placed with non-contracted agencies, of those, 34 are placed with agencies in L.A. County and 44 are in agencies located out of state;**
- **The use of non-contracted and out-of-state agencies is due to the limited resources within L.A. County; a study on a group of 93 Probation youth was conducted by PD and results indicated that the youth had encountered multiple placement rejections and exhausted all services available through contracted group homes or in County providers;**
- **The Probation Department implemented a requirement of Bureau Chief approval for all youth leaving the state of California;**
- **To ensure quality services are being provided, a full on site program review of the agency is conducted prior to placing youth;**

David Grkinich, Probation, added that Commercial Sexual Exploitation Children (CSEC) youth tend to be placed with Probation versus DCFS, and there are currently 11 CSEC youth; however, a process to identify all youth who fall in the CSEC category is in progress.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Karen Richardson, Lisa Campbell Motton and David Grikinich responded as follows:

- **The majority of youth placed in non-contracted agencies are non-verbal and due to their special needs requirements, tend to stay for longer periods of time with the agencies;**
- **The 11 identified CSEC youth are all female, including transgender females, the majority are currently placed in Mingus Mountain, Arizona, Cinnamon Hills, Utah and Iowa. Out of state placement suits CSEC youth best and can assist with breaking the ties to sexual exploitation;**

- Lisa Campbell Motton, Probation Department, will provide data regarding Probation youth placed in out of state non contracted agencies;
- Probation Department does not have contracts with out of state agencies such as Glen Mills or Sierra Sage; however, Probation youth are placed with these agencies;
- The Probation Department's Group Home Ombudsman does not have any contact with youth placed in out of state, non-contracted agencies; however, a monthly update is provided and there is communication with staff and social workers, including a plan for communicating with the youth is in progress;

Youth are placed with agencies that can provide the best resources and can keep them close to their communities;

- Criteria for utilizing contracted and non-contracted agencies is in place; however, the process of evaluating contracted, non-contracted and out of state agencies has changed to include an in-depth program monitoring review; DCFS non contracted out-of-state agencies are reviewed by the State of California's Community Care Licensing Division to ensure they meet the criteria; and
- There are no contracts with Regional Centers due to the placement of a small population of youth.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)
 [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

IV. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEM

7. Approval of Letter of Support for Child Care Bridge Program. (16-1215)

On motion of Commissioner Garen, seconded by Commissioner Kim (Commissioners Berger, Cooper, Kamlager, and Teague being absent), this item was approved.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

V. MISCELLANEOUS

8. Matters not posted on the agenda, to be discussed and (if requested) placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Commission, or matters requiring immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take action arose subsequent to the posting of the agenda. (16-1216)

There were no matters presented.

9. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on item(s) of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Commission. (16-1217)

No members of the public addressed the Commission on this item.

10. Adjournment. (16-1218)

The meeting adjourned at 11:48 a.m.